



## Financial Strategies For Your Future

### December 2023 Newsletter



**With the first snow in the rearview, there's no question that the colder months are upon us. Time to spend cozy evenings with our loved ones, try our hand at winter sports, and enjoy nights in with hot chocolate and a movie.**

**We would love to hear from you! Please feel free to reach out to us at (603)343-4515 or via email at [Eric.Wasson@AztecFG.com](mailto:Eric.Wasson@AztecFG.com).**

### ***Did you know...***

#### **Coffee drinkers live longer!**

Research has linked moderate coffee intake (three to four cups a day) with a longer lifespan. It doesn't need to be caffeinated, either! So don't feel guilty about reaching for that second (or fourth!) cup of the day; it's actually self-care.

## The Sound of Music: The Music Hall

### Where:

*28 Chestnut St, Portsmouth, NH  
03801*

### When:

*Starting Nov. 29th, and continuing  
on select dates and times until Dec.  
17th*

For a limited time, "The Sound of Music" will be gracing the stage of The Music Hall. Set in Austria at the beginning of World War II, this classic musical follows the von Trapp Family and their governess, Maria, as they navigate the challenges of wartime and find comfort and companionship during one of the most tragic periods of modern history.

"The Sound of Music" is sure to delight its audience with uplifting and humorous musical numbers, such as "My Favorite Things", "Do-Re-Mi", "Sixteen Going on Seventeen", and "The Sound of Music." The warmth and message of this musical, though set over eighty years ago, is sure to carry over into the hearts of its audience.

[More Information](#)

## Craft Fair

### Where:

*Somersworth High School  
11 Memorial Dr, Somersworth, NH  
03878*

### When:

*Saturday, Dec. 2nd, 9am-2pm*

Here's your chance to support your local community's small businesses and artists. More than 150 vendors will be participating, with handmade gifts ranging from paint-pour cutting boards resembling the ocean, to 3D quilled pictures of your favorite animals, to jewelry made from gems and stones mined right here in New England, to so much more!

There is no cost to get in, parking is free, and there will even be food available to purchase. What better way to spend a chilly Saturday morning?

[More Information](#)

## Paint Nite: The Original Paint and Sip Party

### Where:

*Revolution Taproom and Grill  
61 N. Main St. Rochester, NH  
03867*

### When:

*Sunday, Dec. 3rd, 5-7pm*

## Clothing Library Fashion Show

### Where:

*Dover Public Library  
73 Locust St. Dover, NH 03820*

### When:

*Friday, Dec. 1st, 6-9pm*

Clothing...library...fashion show? You



Whether you're a seasoned pro or a beginner painter, you will enjoy following along with local artist Katrina Reid as you turn a blank canvas into a masterpiece in just two hours. Have a drink, listen to some music, and enjoy the evening embracing your creative side.

read that right! Coming in December, the Dover Public Library will be opening up a clothing library, where you can borrow clothes like you would books. Come support the launch of the Clothing Library with a public fashion show, promoting secondhand and sustainable fashion. This is a free event that welcomes donations, so bring your friends and enjoy a night of unique entertainment for a good cause!



[More Information](#)

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## 4 Steps to Protecting a Child With Disabilities



Raising a child is expensive and can cost about a quarter of a million dollars, excluding college. For a child with special needs, that cost can more than double. If you're the parent of a child with special needs, it's vital to ensure your child will continue to be provided for after you're gone. It can be difficult to contemplate, but with patience, love, and perseverance, a long-term strategy may be

attainable.

## Envisioning a Life After You

Just as every child with special needs is unique, so too are the challenges families face when preparing for the long term. Think about the potential needs of your child. Will they require daily custodial care? Ongoing medical treatments? Will your child live alone or in a group home? Can family members assume some of the care? Answers to these and other questions can help form the vision of what may need to be done to plan for your child's care.

## Preparing Your Estate

Without proper preparation, your child's lifetime needs can quickly outstrip

your funds. One resource is government benefits, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid, which your child may qualify for depending on their situation. Because such government programs have low-asset thresholds for qualification, you may want to consider whether to make property transfers to your child with special needs.

You should also make sure you have an up-to-date will that reflects your wishes. Consider creating a special needs trust, the assets of which can be structured to fund your child's care without disqualifying them from government assistance. Using a trust involves a complex set of tax rules and regulations. Before moving forward with a trust, consider working with a professional who is familiar with the rules and regulations.

## Involve the Family

All affected family members should be involved in the decision-making process. If at all possible, it's best to have a unified front of surviving family members to care for your child after you've passed on.

## Identify a Caregiver

In order for a caregiver to make financial and health care decisions after your child reaches adulthood, the caregiver must be appointed as a guardian. This can take time, so start setting this in motion as soon as you are able.

To do this, you can write a "Letter of Intent" to the caregiver and family to express your wishes along with information about your child's care. This isn't a legal document, but it may help communicate your desires. Store this letter in a safe place, alongside your will.

Outlining an approach for a child with special needs can be complicated, but you don't have to do it alone. Working with loved ones and qualified professionals can help you navigate the various facets of this challenge. If we can help, please don't hesitate to reach out.

1. Investopedia.com, January 9, 2022

2. AmericanAdvocacyGroup.com, May 3, 2022

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## Buying vs. Leasing a Car





Some people approach buying a car like they approach marriage, "til death do us part." Others prefer to keep their options open, trading in every few years for the latest make and model, the most cutting-edge technology, or the highest horsepower. Whichever describes you best, we all face a similar decision when it comes to acquiring a car: finance, lease, or pay cash.

When shopping for new vehicles, about one-quarter of consumers choose to lease, while the majority choose to finance. From an investment perspective, which choice is best? That depends on your lifestyle, cash flow, and personal preferences.<sup>1</sup>

For many, paying cash for a car is the simplest way to get one. When you drive off the lot, you own the vehicle outright and are free to do whatever you want with it. You face no penalties or mileage restrictions, and you have no monthly payments. However, you have paid cash for a vehicle that is expected to depreciate over time.

Financing a new car requires a smaller initial outlay of money, usually 20% or more of the vehicle's value, in the form of a down payment. When you drive off the lot, the bank owns the car, not you. As with most loans, you make monthly payments of principal and interest with the promise of eventual ownership. The amount of your payment depends on a variety of factors, including the value of the car, the length of the loan, and the interest rate offered by the lender. Car dealers sometimes will offer "no money down" or low annual percentage rate loans, which can make financing more manageable.<sup>2</sup>

If you like to have a new car every few years, leasing is an approach to consider. Leasing a car is like renting an apartment. You pay a monthly fee to use the car for a specific amount of time, usually three to four years. Monthly payments are typically lower than when you finance since you are paying for the depreciation on the car while you drive it. In certain situations, lease payments may also have tax considerations. However, there are caveats to leasing. For one, a lease typically stipulates the number of miles you are permitted to drive during the course of the lease. At the end of

your lease, you may face penalties if you have exceeded the total number of miles in the contract.<sup>3,4</sup>

Whatever your relationship with your car, it may eventually come time for a new one. Familiarize yourself with your options. You may find that changing your strategy makes sense in light of your lifestyle or financial situation.

1. Experian.com, June 1, 2023

2. Investopedia.com, January 9, 2023

3. The information in this material is not intended as tax or legal advice. It may not be used for the purpose of avoiding any federal tax penalties. Please consult legal or tax professionals for specific information regarding your individual situation.

4. Bankrate.com, June 1, 2023

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## Good Health is Good Business



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, productivity losses linked to employees not showing up to work due to five risk factors—diabetes, smoking, high blood pressure, physical inactivity, and obesity—cost US employers \$36.4 billion a year.<sup>1</sup>

Business owners and managers understand very well the rising cost of healthcare and the loss of productivity associated with absenteeism and employee disengagement, which is 85% of large companies that offer health benefits also offer one or more wellness programs.<sup>2</sup>

Employer efforts are bearing fruit. According to one study, for every \$1 spent on employee wellness programs, businesses can save \$2.73 through the benefits of reduced absenteeism.<sup>3</sup>



# The Profile of a Successful Wellness Program

**Tailored:** An effective employee wellness program is multifaceted and must reflect the personal needs and interests of a diverse workforce.

**Incentives:** Incentives, such as rewards and recognition, communicate the employer's care and support for the program and help drive employee participation.

**Measurable:** To maintain ongoing support, there should be tracking of the program's impact.

## Common Wellness Program Offerings

Some of the more common employer wellness offerings include smoking cessation, physical activity, mental health, health club membership, and nutrition.<sup>4</sup>

Employers are also starting to focus more on overall well-being, as opposed to just physical well-being. As a result, some employers are adding other features to their wellness programs, such as programs that address stress management.

## A Bonus

Good health is as much a social endeavor as it is a personal journey. These programs can often create employee interactions unlikely to occur during the workday, prompting conversations and relations that catalyze new ideas and improve your work culture.

1. CDC.gov, 2023

2. KFF.org, 2022

3. WellSteps.com, February 7, 2023

4. WellSteps.com, February 8, 2023

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**Eric Wasson, CFP®**

**Certified Financial  
Planner™**

**Financial Consultant**

**Phone: (603) 343-4515**

**Fax: (603) 343-1863**

**[Eric.Wasson@AztecFG.com](mailto:Eric.Wasson@AztecFG.com)**



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AZTEC Financial Group | 660 Central Ave., Dover, NH 03820

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